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**Congress of the United States**  
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April 28, 2004

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

We are writing to express our strong support for preserving the spectrum set-aside for educational use by students and schools. As the Commission updates the rules for Instructional Television Fixed Service ("ITFS") to more effectively support a range of new digital education services, we urge you to reject efforts to allow any portion of this spectrum to be licensed to commercial entities.

As you know, there is broad bipartisan support in Congress for the effective use of technology in education. Students in school today must master a range of advanced skills in order to succeed in school, find quality work, and contribute to their communities. More than 1,200 educational entities hold nearly 2,200 ITFS licenses across the country, serving hundreds of thousands of students, and these services would be disrupted if ITFS licenses were to be transferred from educational to commercial entities. Rural communities that rely on distance education programming through ITFS would be especially hard hit.

Instructional Television Fixed Service has been an effective educational tool since its inception several decades ago. ITFS licensees make extensive use of the spectrum to provide formal classroom instruction, distance learning, videoconference capability, and professional development services to a wide variety of users.

Once the FCC adopts new technical rules, the ability of ITFS to serve educators and students will be significantly enhanced. Elementary and secondary schools, community colleges, and universities will have the ability to roll out additional educational tools, and access to these educational enhancements will be provided to hundreds of thousands of additional students.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to reaffirm that ITFS licenses be held only by educational entities, and reject efforts to license any portion of this spectrum to commercial entities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey

Mary J. Owens

Jan Schabert

W. L. G.

Mike Biderakis

Tom

Ralph M. Hall

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Jim Ows

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Cliff Henry

Bobby L. Rush

cc: Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy  
Commissioner Kevin Martin  
Commissioner Michael Copps  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein